



## Joint News Release

Joint Public Relations Team

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### **OWNERS, RESIDENTS OF BUILDINGS WITH FLAT ROOFS URGED TO BE AWARE OF SNOW LOAD DANGERS**

Faced with unprecedented snow loads on flat roofs around the state and initial reports of some roof collapses already, the Delaware Emergency Management Agency recommends that building owners and residents of those buildings be aware of the weight loads that these back-to-back storms may be creating. Only qualified individuals should be sent to inspect roofs, and all appropriate safety measure must be followed.

Property owners or residents should take the following into consideration:

1. Monitor the weather and condition of the roof.
2. Inspect roofs for leaks or structural deficiencies that may develop during the storm.
3. Clear leaves, snow, ice, silt, or other debris from gutters, drains, downspouts, and scuppers.

#### • **After A Storm**

1. Have a professional licensed contractor remove all snow immediately from every roof surface, including roof overhangs and covered porches.

2. Remove snow from side walls to prevent high snow mounds from pushing them in.
3. Temporarily shore up and brace dipping or sagging roofs or walls.
4. Verify that drains are clear of ice and snow to allow melting and runoff. If the roof is pitched and does not have drains, open paths to the eaves to ensure drainage and prevent ponding.
5. Avoid ice dams by keeping the attic well ventilated so snow doesn't melt and refreeze at the roof's edge. Also make certain the attic floor is well insulated to minimize the amount of heat rising from the house into the attic.

Here are several other points to consider:

- Improper operation of doors or windows, deflection of ceiling finishes or exposed beams, roof leaks or sprinkler heads moved from their normal positions all could be signs of roof failure.
- Barns and other agricultural out-buildings can present a safety hazard. Be especially careful when entering those buildings and make prudent decisions about housing animals in those structures.
- Contact a structural engineer, building inspector or other qualified individual if you are concerned about the structural integrity of a building. Consider evacuating or moving out of the building if appropriate.
- Because of the anticipated cold temperatures, this threat will remain in place for a considerable time after the snow fall ends.

Property owners should contact their insurance companies for more information.

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